Oregon’s Tobacco Control Scientists on the Value of Oregon’s Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP)

Oregon scientists who conduct research on tobacco control are issuing this statement. We have worked on smoking and smokeless tobacco cessation and adolescent prevention; created and evaluated media, web-based, clinical, and classroom-based interventions to reduce tobacco use; studied the extent and cost of tobacco use. One of us began smoking cessation research in the 1960s. Some of us helped write Surgeon General Reports on smoking and National Cancer Institute monographs on tobacco use. Others have testified in major trials against the tobacco companies. We have published extensively on the tobacco problem. In short, we are Oregon’s experts on the tobacco problem. As such, we feel a responsibility to provide our knowledge to the legislature as it seeks to ensure the wellbeing of Oregonians.

The Cost of Tobacco Use in Lives and Money

Smoking is the number one preventable cause of disease and death in Oregon. It kills five times as many people as motor vehicle accidents, suicide, AIDS and homicide combined. It is as though a plane crashed in Oregon killing 133 people every week of the year.

Oregon Deaths to Preventable Causes

Based on numerous careful studies of the cost of smoking related illnesses, we know that the annual cost of medical care and lost productivity to smoking-related death and disability is about $2 billion per year in Oregon.

The Value of Increasing the Price of Tobacco

Numerous studies show that increasing the price of tobacco products will reduce consumption increasing quitting, and prevent young people from starting to smoke (Chaloupka & Grossman, 1996).
TPEP Reduces Tobacco Use

Public health officers and researchers around the country recognize the success of Oregon’s tobacco control program. Since 1996, when the program began, cigarette consumption has dropped much more rapidly in Oregon than in the nation as a whole.

Success of the Oregon Quit Line

Jeffrey Fellows at Kaiser Permanente’s Center for Health Research evaluated the cost-effectiveness of the TPEP-funded Oregon Tobacco Quitline and the Free Patch Initiative. A randomized trial of alternative phone counseling and medication strategies found that more intensive services increased quit rates for the same cost per quit as less intensive interventions. An evaluation of the Free Patch Initiative found that providing free NRT increased the number of quitters by 500% compared to the pre-Initiative period. An estimate of the cost savings from reduced health care expenditures and increased productivity has not yet occurred, but the savings will likely be substantial and well above the initial cost of cessations services. Oregon’s effort to assist smokers in quitting is good for business and good for health.

The Value of Antitobacco Media

TV ads are a valuable way to reduce smoking. They increase the number of smokers who call quit lines and attempt to quit (e.g. Owen, 2000; Wakefield & Borland, 2000). In addition, the prevention ads that TPEP sponsors reduce the number of teens who take up smoking (Emery et al., 2005). There is no evidence that tobacco company ads prevent smoking, and some evidence that teens who see tobacco company ads directed at parents become more likely to smoke (Wakefield et al., 2006).
Support for Vital Inpatient Cessation
TPEP is helping to promote a project called Step Up! Inpatient cessation is one of the most important things to help reduce smoking. Within Oregon’s 54 hospitals, TPEP leads a coalition of organizations focused on (a) systematic smoking cessation intervention for all hospitalized patients, (b) comprehensive insurance benefits (pharmacotherapy and counseling) for all hospital employees, (c) smoke-free hospital policies, and (d) getting hospitals to become leaders in their communities to help local businesses address tobacco. Mohiuddin et al. (2007) reported that inpatient cessation reduced mortality of patients with heart disease.

Success of Prevention
Schools that received TPEP funding for prevention had a significantly lower rate of teens starting to smoke. However, when the legislature cut funds for those schools in 2003, a significantly larger percent of Oregon teenagers began smoking between eighth and eleventh grade.

Preventing teen smoking also helps to prevent the problems caused by maternal smoking, such as prematurity, low birth weight, and sudden infant death. In Oregon in 2004, 5,683 babies were born to smoking mothers; 18% of teenage mothers smoked during pregnancy. On average, the newborn of a smoking mother costs 700% more than do babies of nonsmoking mothers.

Eighth and eleventh-grade smoking prevalence by age cohort in TPEP-funded schools, Oregon 1999 to 2006.

Note: Each line shows the increase in smoking prevalence from the eighth grade to the eleventh grade for an age cohort of students from funded or formerly funded schools.

Conclusion
Funding TPEP is likely will significantly improve the health of Oregonians by reducing tobacco use. It will increase smokers quitting and prevent young people from starting to smoke, by using the programs and practices that research has shown can significantly reduce tobacco control.
References

Judy Andrews, Ph.D.
Dr. Andrews has published extensively in the area of tobacco etiology, prevention, and cessation. She is currently testing the efficacy of an empirically developed tobacco prevention program for elementary-aged children based on her etiological work.

Dennis V. Ary, Ph.D.
Dr. Ary is Science Director and founding President of Oregon Center for Applied Science. He has conducted tobacco prevention and cessation research for over 25 years and has published more than 60 scientific articles. He is a nationally recognized researcher in preventive medicine.

Charles J. Bentz MD, FACP
Dr. Bentz is the Medical Director of Tobacco Cessation and Prevention for the Providence Health System in Oregon; however, his primary job is clinician-teacher in the community-based internal medicine residency at St. Vincent Hospital in Portland. He holds a position as Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of General Internal Medicine and Geriatrics at OHSU. In addition to patient care, teaching, and directing the clinical activities of the Providence tobacco program, Dr. Bentz is becoming a health services researcher in tobacco.

Anthony Biglan, Ph.D.
Dr. Biglan is a Senior Scientist at Oregon Research Institute and Director of the Center for Community Interventions on Childrearing in Eugene, Oregon. His research on child and adolescent problem behavior includes numerous experimental evaluations of family, school, clinical, and community preventive interventions targeting tobacco and other substance use, antisocial behavior, or risky sexual behavior among adolescents.

Shawn Boles, Ph.D.
Dr. Boles is a Senior Research Associate at Oregon Research Institute, member of the Center on Early Adolescence, and Emeritus Senior Research Associate in the Center on Human Development at the University of Oregon. He has been a methodologist on various research studies focused on assessing the impact of behavior change programs in public health and educational settings and has been active in systems change and evaluation research for 30 years.
Brian Danaher, Ph.D.
Dr. Danaher is a tobacco control researcher at Oregon Research Institute. He has been actively involved in the development and evaluation of Internet-based tobacco cessation (cigarette smoking and smokeless tobacco use) programs for both adults and youth.

Rebecca J. Donatelle, Ph.D.
Dr. Donatelle is Associate Professor, Health Promotion and Behavior, Department of Public Health, Oregon State University. She has conducted several large randomized, controlled trials over the last decade focused on the use of incentives, biomarker feedback, education and social support in motivating high risk, low income pregnant smokers to remain abstinent. Her research group has achieved the highest biochemically confirmed abstinence rates to date in this population of younger smokers. Outcomes from these intervention studies have formed the basis for national recommendations/strategies to use in interventions with high-risk, pregnant smokers.

Jeffrey Fellows, Ph.D.
Dr. Fellows is a health economist and Center for Health Research Investigator with extensive experience assessing the disease burden of tobacco and evaluating the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of tobacco control interventions. He was a contributing author to the 2004 Surgeon General Report *The Health Consequences of Smoking*. He currently serves on Washington State’s Tobacco Prevention and Control Expert Evaluation Advisory Committee and regularly serves as a consultant to other state tobacco-control programs.

Brian R Flay, D.Phil.
Dr. Flay is Professor of Public Health and Director of the Prevention Research Center at OSU. He has been a smoking prevention researcher for over 30 years with a focus on school-based programs and the use of mass media. He was an author on the forthcoming Institute of Medicine report on Tobacco Control and published over 180 articles in peer-reviewed journals.

Judith S. Gordon, Ph.D.
Dr. Gordon is a Senior Scientist at Oregon Research Institute who has been conducting tobacco cessation and prevention research since 1990. In addition, Dr. Gordon has extensive clinical experience. She has published in scholarly and lay journals and on the Internet.

Jack F. Hollis, Ph.D.
Dr. Hollis, of the Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research in Portland, has conducted tobacco cessation research for over 25 years, including a large randomized trial of the Oregon Tobacco Quitline. He also led a large study of teen smoking interventions during routine medical visits and is currently testing an internet and phone counseling program to help teens quit.

Edward Lichtenstein, Ph.D.
Dr. Lichtenstein has conducted tobacco control research for over 40 years and has authored or co-authored over 150 publications. He developed the first effective smoking cessation intervention.

Victor J. Stevens, Ph.D.
Dr. Stevens, with Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research in Portland, has been conducting research on tobacco cessation for 25 years. He is a nationally prominent preventive medicine researcher who has published more than 30 scientific articles on tobacco cessation.